

## Warden Message

September 4, 2009

Dear Warden and/or Registrant:

The Consulate General in Guayaquil wishes to inform American citizens visiting or resident in the Guayaquil area of an increase in crime involving American citizens using taxis. Recently, there have been several incidents of robberies, called “express kidnappings,” or “secuestros express,” where taxi drivers and accomplices threatened passengers, usually with guns, and held them captive as they drove them to various ATMs to withdraw money. American citizens are urged not to hail taxis on the street. “Express kidnappings” have occurred in more affluent areas in Guayaquil such as Urdesa, the Malecón 2000, and outside of the San Marino Mall. Incidents have also been reported in the coastal cities of Manta and Machala. U.S. citizens are urged to use caution when selecting a taxi in these areas, regardless of location and time of day.

Due to the seriousness of the taxi situation, all personnel working for the U.S. Diplomatic Mission in Guayaquil have been prohibited from riding in taxis hailed off the street, even yellow taxis. As an alternative, employees have been told to use their personal vehicles, or to call one of the vetted taxi services available on the U.S. Consulate General’s website:

<http://guayaquil.usconsulate.gov>

If you find yourself involved in a robbery, we recommend you be non-confrontational and cooperate with the robber. Nothing material is as valuable as your life.

If U.S. citizens are involved in a criminal incident, they are encouraged to file a “denuncia,” or “theft report,” with the local police and then to inform the American Citizens Services Office at the U.S. Consulate General Guayaquil. We are located at 9 de Octubre y Garcia Moreno, Guayaquil, Ecuador, Tel +593-4-232-3570 or after hours at +593-4-232-1151.

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Americans living or traveling in Ecuador are encouraged to register with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate through the [State Department’s travel registration website](http://travel.state.gov), and to obtain updated information on travel and security within Ecuador. Americans without Internet access may register directly with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. By registering, American citizens make it easier for the Embassy or Consulate to contact them in case of emergency. Please see the following links for local warden message information in Quito and Guayaquil, respectively, <http://ecuador.usembassy.gov> and <http://guayaquil.usconsulate.gov>.

U.S. citizens should consult the Country Specific Information for Ecuador and the latest Travel Alerts and Warnings and Worldwide Caution at the Department's web site at <http://travel.state.gov>. Updated information on travel and security in Ecuador may also be obtained from the Department of State by calling 1-888-407-4747 within the United States or by calling 1-202-501-4444 outside the United States.

The U.S. Embassy in Quito is located at Avigiras E12-170 y Eloy Alfaro. The telephone during business hours (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) is (011) 593 2 398 5000 X3800. Within the same city use the last seven digits. Add the city code for intercity telephone calls. See also the Embassy web site at <http://ecuador.usembassy.gov>. American Citizen walk-in hours are between 1:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday thru Thursday, excluding U.S. and Ecuadorian holidays.

The U.S. Consulate General in Guayaquil is located at the corner of Avenida 9 de Octubre and Garcia Moreno (near the Hotel Oro Verde); telephone (011-593-4) 232-3570 during business hours (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) or 232-1152 for after-hours emergencies; fax (011-593-4) 232-0904. See the Consulate General web site at <http://guayaquil.usconsulate.gov>.